

Senator Winfield, Representative Stafstrom, ranking members Kissel and Fishbein and distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee:

My name is Candace Fuchs, I am from Old Lyme and a supporter of CT Against Gun Violence. As a developer of medicine I am a believer in the scientific method, and as a Democratic Town Committee member, I am a believer in everyone's human right to be free from gun violence.

I am testifying in favor of HB-6355, An Act Concerning Risk Protection Orders.

Let the facts drive the discussion. Two thirds of gun deaths in Connecticut are suicides. Firearm suicide is the second leading cause of suicide. Limiting access to firearms for those at risk of harming themselves or others has been shown to reduce firearm suicide by as much as 7.5%.

Diseases of mental health such as depression are not transient. To allow at risk persons to regain their firearms upon expiration without demonstration that the risk has abated ignores the chronic reality of these diseases.

To apply the ERPO laws only to those who currently own guns is non-sensical and discriminatory. Whether it is your first gun, or your twentieth, it has the same capacity to kill.

The argument that allowing civilians to directly petition the court for an ERPO presents a risk of perjury would call into question any law reliant on truthful testimony. The risk of perjury is ubiquitous, and is mitigated with laws that make submission of false testimony a felony.

Since the horrific events at Sandy Hook, Connecticut has led the way in bringing gun safety to American society. Now is not the time to retreat.

I ask that you favorably report HB-6355 out of committee so that the General Assembly can vote to strengthen our Extreme Risk Protection law so that it works harder to prevent firearm suicide and homicide. Thank you for your consideration.